

Halo Reach: Refusal

by Tear of Light

Category: Halo

Genre: Family, Tragedy

Language: English

Characters: SPARTAN-B312/Noble Six

Status: Completed

Published: 2011-10-23 15:29:44

Updated: 2011-10-23 15:29:44

Packaged: 2016-04-27 00:31:01

Rating: T

Chapters: 1

Words: 7,236

Publisher: www.fanfiction.net

Summary: "When Reach falls, and it will fall..." Noble Six didn't want to believe Halsey's words. Yet here she was, alone on Reach, fighting a losing battle, and even then she refused to fall. A Halo Reach one shot.

Halo Reach: Refusal

****Refusal****

****A/N****: This is my first and probably will be my only attempt at a Halo Reach (or Halo anything for that matter) fanfiction. While I have considered the idea of writing a Halo Reach multi-chaptered piece, I couldn't come up with anything viable or much longer aside from what encompasses this brief one shot. This idea has been floating around my mind for quite some time now and I couldn't bring myself to completely forget about it. As such, I have taken a few liberties here and there, doing some minor tweaking of the in game cutscenes. I'm pretty sure I mixed up a few details in my story as well, despite referring to Halo Wikia. Oh well. So here you have it, a brief glimpse into the life of Noble Six, my Noble Six.

The one shot is unbetaed. All errors are mine.
XD

For those of you who've left unsigned reviews after this fanfic's completion, see my replies below:

Guest - Thanks for the comment. ^^ Yep, this was my first Halo fanfic. Thanks! If you're interested, I do have a sequel to this called "Detached Attachment". Enjoy!

_ Six out - Thanks for the comment! I'm glad you enjoyed it. :)_

_ Guest - Thanks for the comment. ^^ I was a bit worried the flashing back and forth between the action and flashbacks would ruin the story, but in the end, it turned out great. :)_

_**Warning: **_There _is _some _graphic _scenes _ahead. _If _you _don't _like _that, _now _would_ be _the _time _to _close _your _browser _or _go _to _another _page. _You _have _been _warned!_

**Disclaimer**: _The _characters _and _the _worlds _I _write _in _do _not _belong _to _me. _The _stories _that _I _write _are _intended _for _entertainment _purposes. _I _do _not _make _any _money _from _them._

* * *

><p>Summary: "When Reach falls, and it will fall..." Noble Six didn't want to believe Dr. Halsey's words. Yet here she was, alone on Reach, fighting a losing battle, and even then she refused to fall.

* * *

><p>For a long time, all Six knew was refusal.<p>

"Good *guns, ****Spartan! ****All ****stations ****brace ****for ****cast ****off."***

Refusal to give up ground. Refusal to let the Covenant win. Refusal to let humanity's hope die. But then there was the refusal of her heart. The refusal to get close to other people. And the refusal for other people to get close to her.

"This *is ****the ****Pillar ****of ****Autumn. ****We ****are ****away. ****And ****the ****package ****is ****with ****us."***

Somehow that all changed during the time in between meeting Noble Team and now. Noble Six didn't know what had happened or why, but despite all the horrors buried in her past which inevitably led her to this point, this was the one time she refused to let that truth get buried as well.

_She _stared _at _the _helmet _in _her _hands, _her _reflection _seen _as _clear _as _day _in _the _visor. _Her _eyes _narrowed, _before _she _flipped _the _helmet _over _and _pulled _it _on _her _head. _The _seals _automatically _hissed _and _locked _with _a _click, _her _heads _up _display_ quickly _flashing _into _place _across _her _field _of _vision. _Her _suit's _shield _automatically _came _to _life_ on _its _own. _The _Warthog _bounced _a _few _times _on _the _uneven _ground, _the _driver_ " _a _young _looking _ODST _- _guiding _the _mechanical _marvel _down _the _beaten _path _between _stoney _hills _of _rock _on _the _mountain side. _Two_ Falcons _flew _past _them _on _the _way _to _their _destination. _It _was _time _for _her _to _meet _her _new _team._

The Covenant cruiser above the Aszod shipbreaking yards went down in a blaze of fire and smoke. Noble Six slowly climbed down the ladder to the Mass Driver otherwise known as the Mark 2488 Magnetic Accelerator Cannon, her eyes skywards looking at the Pillar of Autumn as it disengaged from the ship port and ascended. The support thrusters quickly spent themselves, falling from the Halcyon-class cruiser just before the Autumn's main thrusters came online and took it space side. Noble Six stared at the blue glow of the engines until they faded from sight, enveloped by the fushia tinted clouds. Pulling her beloved M392 DMR from her back, Noble Six lowered her gaze to remains of Reach. It was only her now. Here at the shipyard at least.

Two Covenant Banshees flew overhead, one of many pairs scouring the remains of Reach before the final glassing. Nobel Six let her gaze wander across the sky, the Spartan still standing on the very loading dock where she handed over the female AI to Captain Keyes. It was strange, Six noted, the peaceful feeling of calm. Just moments before, her heart pounded in her chest like a ragged drum during a ritualistic dance as Six waited for the Covenant cruiser to come into range of the Onager. But now, now there was nothing but quiet. She had not felt this at ease since... since before she ever knew there was such a thing as the Covenant...

_"The __office __of __Naval __intelligence __believes __deployment __of __a __Spartan __team __is __a __gross __misallocation __of __resources...__I __disagree."_

_A cybernetic __arm __shot __out __in __front __of __her, __barring __further __entry __into __the __temporary __base __camp. __Noble __Six __eyed __the __female __Spartan __blocking __her __path._

_"Commander," the __woman __said, __turning __to __whom __Six __assumed __to __be __her __commanding __officer. __Noble __Six __did __not __miss __the __look __over __the __female __Spartan __gave __her._

_Noble Six's __gaze __moved __from __the __teal __armored __Spartan __to __fall __upon __the __Spartan __seated __directly __in __front __of __her. __The __man __was __sharpening __his __kukri __knife __on __his __shoulder __pad. __It __was __an __unusually __large __knife __in __Six's __opinion, __the __former __lone __wolf __wondering __just __how __many __times __the __knife __wielder __had __actually __used __it __in __live __combat. __Six's __eyes __narrowed __under __her __helmet, __as __the __Spartan __with __the __skull __decorated __helmet __paused __for __a __split __second __to __give __her __a __calculating __look __before __continuing __on __with __his __task._

_"So that's __our __new __number __Six."_

_Noble Six __turned __her __head __to __the __right, __eyes __darting __between __the __Spartans __at __the __far __end __of __the __room __near __the __communications __console. __She __took __a __step __past __the __female __Spartan, __pulling __back __her __shoulders __and __straightening __her __stance __as __she __sized __them __up._

_"Kat, you __read __her __file?" __It __was __the __Spartan __with

__the __knife. __Noble __Six __didn't__ look __at __him.__

__"Only the __parts __that __weren't __covered __in __black __ink,"
__Kat__ replied __somewhere __behind __her.__

__The Spartan __in __blue, __the __one __Six __guessed __to __be __the
__leader __of __the __group, __turned__ back __to the
__communications __console __to __continue __his __briefing __with
__Colonel __Holland. __Noble __Six __stood __in __her __spot,
__waiting__ patiently __to __be __acknowledge __by __her __new
__commanding __officer. __Something __about __the __man,__ even
__from __this __distance __bothered __her. __Familiarity, __she
__realized __a __moment __later. __Six__ battled __with __herself
__to __squash __the __ghosts __of __her __past. __All __the __while,
__she __could __feel__ the __eyes __of __the __others __on __her,
__even __the __first __one __she __had __passed __in __the__ Falcon
__on __her __way __over __here. __This __is __why __she __hated__
working __in __a __team. __Too __much __attention __directed __her
__way.__

Movement to the left caught her attention. Six turned her head to see an incoming Phantom closing in on her position. Flexing the fingers in her right hand, Noble Six raised her rifle to peer through the scope. A good deal of uglies to fight. Good. She was getting bored anyhow. Six proceeded forward towards the enemy, taking refuge in a half destroyed building close to the drop zone. Checking her weapon for ammunition, Six couldn't but chuckle as the memories of her first meeting with Noble Team came to mind.

__"__Lieutenant.__"

__"Commander, Sir." __Noble __Six __closed __the __distance __between
__herself __and __the __now __turned __Spartan __in __dark __blue.
__She __saluted __him.__

__"I'm Carter, __Noble __Team's__ leader." __

__The other __Spartans __took __this __as __their __cue __to __suit
__up __and __head __out __of __the __make shift __base. __Noble __Six
__bristled __inwardly. __It __was__ like __after __they __had __a
__good __look __at __her, __they __couldn't __be __bothered __with
__her__ any more. __The __excitement __over __the __new __guy,__ or
__in __this __case, __girl, __quickly __wore __off __and__ she__ was
__dropped __in __favour __of __something __else __more __exciting.
__That, __or __perhaps __she __was __just__ smelly __and __that __was
__her __subtle __clue __to __take __a __shower. __Why __did__ the
__higher __ups __want __her __teamed __up __with __these
__people?__

__"That's Kat, __Noble __Two." __Carter's __words__ drew __Six__ back
__from __her __thoughts, __Noble__ Team's __leader __nodding __in
__the __direction __of __the __others __as __he __put __names __to__
faces. __"Emile __and __Jorge, __Four __and __Five."__

__Noble Six __looked __over __her __shoulder, __eyes __watching __as
__the __rest __of __her __new __team __exited __in
__silence.__

__"You're riding __with __me, __Noble__ Six."__

__Six's head __snapped __back __to __look __at __Carter __as __he
__passed __her __by, __putting __on __his __own __helmet. __Her
__eyes __narrowed __a __fraction, __Noble __Six __quietly
__following __behind __her __commanding __officer, __bitter. __He
__never __asked __her __for __her __name.__

That was the beginning, wasn't it?

A Grunt's methane tank exploded upwards, the smallest of the aliens garbling nonsense as it expired under a hail of bullets.

That was the beginning of it all. The beginning of her walls cracking and crumbling down. The beginning of feelings returning to her. The beginning of Six's true face starting to show again. How absurd. After all of the years she spent perfecting her mask of disconnect, after all of the years denying that she had the thing called feelings, all it took for everything to start breaking apart was one man. One man who did not ask for her name.

Plasma rained from the sky.

Six ducked behind the flimsy wall of cover she had to reload her weapon. As she did so, she could hear the barking grunts of Elites as the enemy forces converged on her position. Six snorted. Her name. It all started because of her name. The thing she had long since dropped, as if it never existed in the first place. It couldn't have remained if she truly wanted to be a Spartan. Her name, it belonged with her old life. A life she no longer had. All ties had to be cut, not that there was much to cut after she watched her city burn to the ground and her parents and family taken with it. She had been a child at the time, too young to understand the reasoning behind the glassing but old enough to understand the horror of it.

Stooping down next to the body of a fallen UNSC trooper, Noble Six relieved the corpse of its compliment of grenades, pulling the pins on two of them. Without even looking, she tossed them in the direction of the advancing alien force and waited.

What was it about her name that got her so worked up? Carter had done exactly what she wanted. He didn't ask for a name. He didn't need to. They were there to get a job done, not sit around all day chatting each other up. For years, that's all she wanted. She didn't want to hear the mention of her name, not even an utterance. The moment that sound, those three syllables came out, memories of her old life flashed to the forefront of her mind, reminding her of how pathetic she was as a child. That she was weak. Which is why she needed to get stronger. Because how else were the fallen supposed to get their vengeance? How would those who fell before get their justice? Easy. Six.

Panic filled cries sounded, Elites, Grunts and Jackals scrambling for cover as the grenades exploded with a boom. As they did, Six stepped out of cover and opened fire.

__"Not__ gonna __lie __to __you, __Lieutenant. __You're __stepping
__into __some __shoes __the __rest __of __the __squad __would
__rather __leave __unfilled. "__Carter __looked __back __over __his__
shoulder __at __Six, __for __three __seconds __longer __than __he
__needed __to, __in __Six's __opinion.__

"_Me, I'm __just __happy __to __have __Noble __back __up __to __full __strength."_

_Noble Six __remained __silent, __simply __clenching __and __unclenching __her __fist __out __of __sight. __She __knew __not __to __expect __a __warm __welcome __from __her __new __team, __especially __after __hearing __the __rumors __of __her __predecessor's __demise. __But __even __so, __Noble __Six __couldn't __but __feel __disappointed, __upset __even. __Noble __Six __shook __her __head. __Sentimentality __was __for __the __weak. __She __was __not __that __any more. __She __refused __to __let __her __past __resurface __again. __No __matter __how __much __Carter __reminded __her __of __someone __else._

Noble Six cursed, pink needles hailing the area just above her head as she ducked for cover again. Those blasted things annoyed her to no end. Alarms beeped at her, the indicator on her helmet showing that her shield was down to half capacity. Six really needed to get her head into the game. She didn't know how the bugger with the Needlers got so close to her. One moment, she was in the process of taking down a blue armored Elite with a Plasma Rifle. And in the next moment, pink needles were bouncing off her shield like fireworks.

Six's DMR spat twice, the gurgled choke of a grunt on his own blood music to Six's ears. Ducking behind cover again, she crept around the other side of the rumble to avoid being boxed in. Six couldn't but smile at the confused blurps coming from the Covenant on the other side of the wall from her. Six was back in her element. The lone wolf. It was like learning to ride a bike. Once you figured out how to do it the first time, every time after that came naturally. The smile from Six's face faded.

Something was off. As natural as it was to fall back into instilled habits, there was an empty feeling, a deep hollowness which ate at her from the inside. She had never noticed it before. That is, until now.

_Carter __continued __forward, __leading __her __towards __one __of __the __waiting __Falcons. __In __the __nearest __one, __the __final __member __of __her __squad __sat, __already __waiting __with __his __sniper __rifle __in __hand. __Six __glanced __at __the __Spartan._

_"Just one __thing..."_

_Noble Six __turned __her __attention __back __to __Carter, __just __as __he __hoisted __himself __up __into __the __Falcon __and __sat __down._

_"I've seen __your __file."_

_Six climbed __in __after __him, __seating __herself __directly __opposite __Carter, __with __Jun __on __her __left._

_"Even the __parts __the __ONI __censors __didn't __want __me __to. __I'm __glad __to __have __your __skill-set."_

_Noble Six __raised __her __gaze __to __meet __Carter's. __She

__couldn't __tell __if __he __was __actually __happy__ about __that
__or __just __saying__ it __for __the __sake __of __saying __it. __It
__was __hard __to__ read __a __person __when __they __were __covered
__head __to __foot __in __armor, __especially __Carter. __He__ was
__half __a__ head __taller __than __her __with __his __armor __on,
__and __it __didn't __help__ that __Six __liked __to __slouch __a
__bit __when __she __sat. __The __fingers __of __her __right __hand__
curled __slightly, __resting __on __her __thigh.__
>

__"But __we're a __team," __Carter __continued __his __lecture.__

__Six glanced __in __Jun's __direction __momentarily. __Her __lips
__curled __into __a __sneer. __She __knew __this __was __coming. __It
__always __came __at __one__ point __or __another. __Word __got
__around __fast, __especially __about __her, __no __matter __the
__size __of __the __military. __Something __about __her __being
__hyper __lethal, __that __fact __making __her __more __special
__than __the __others. __She __would __have __huffed __in
__indignation __if __it __wasn't __for __the __others __nearby.
__Instead, __Noble Six __turned __back __to __her __commanding
__officer __as __he __waved __to __the __pilot __to __lift
__off.__

__"That lone-wolf __stuff __stays __behind. __Clear?" __Carter
__lowered __his __helmet __just __a __fraction __as __he __looked
__at __her. __Had __it __not __been __for __his__ reflective __visor
__blocking __her __view, __Six __would __have __sworn __he __was
__staring__ her __down.__

__If it __was __one __thing __Six __hated __the __most, __it __was__
being __stared __at.__ "Got __it, __Sir," __she __replied __through
__clenched __teeth.__

__Noticing the __staring__ contest __between __the __Rookie __and
__the __Commander __wasn't __going __to __end __just __yet, __Jun
__chose __that __time __to __speak.__ "Welcome __to__ Reach.__"

A flaming blue blur flew across her line of vision and landed in
front of her. Six's eyes went wide. "Holy sh-"

A split second later, Noble Six went diving out of cover just as the
Plasma Grenade detonated. She wasn't quite far enough away to evade
the blast completely, but thankful the remainder of her shields
absorbed the fallout. Noble Six's head shot up at the sound of
engines. Three more Phantoms were inbound, ready to drop soldiers
nearby. She smirked. It seemed she had gotten their attention.

Noble Six zipped past the current cluster of Covenant filling the air
around her with plasma. This is exactly what she needed. She was
bored after all, always having been the type to keep moving and kill
stuff. That, and this was a lot better than thinking about the void
in the pit of her stomach, which had seemingly gotten bigger the more
she thought about it. While she didn't know what the cause of it was,
in some sense she did know. She just didn't want to admit it. No, she
refused to admit it, to herself. For the moment at least. Her natural
habit of refusal was kicking in again. The refusal to admit the
truth. The refusal to die at the hands of these scumbags.

Noble Six dove behind the closest cover she could find, another

crumbled structure, this one closer to a still half standing chain-link fence with barbed wire at the top of it. Peering out of cover, Six watched as the numbers of her enemies doubled.

The relay station was far too quiet for Six's liking, especially with the type of resistance they had met earlier. Something didn't feel right, and Six knew everyone else felt the same way too. But orders were orders, and right now, her orders were to search the corpse in front of her for anything useful.

Noble Six swallowed, pausing a moment to say a silent prayer for the dead elderly man before she set about searching his cold, stiff body. Six was not really a religious person, but while she wasn't sure just what she believed in when it came to deities and the divine, that wouldn't stop her from hoping and praying that this guy had a quick and painless end. If only she could be so fortunate when the time came.

"Found something..." Noble Six said, holding up the chip card to examine it. It had fallen out of the man's breast pocket when she turned him over onto his side.

"I'll take that, Six. Not your domain." Kat instantly snatched the card from her hand.

Six gritted her teeth, glaring at Noble Two as the other Spartan looked at the chip card intently. Not that Kat could see it, with her attention elsewhere at the moment. Noble Six huffed silently, rising to her feet. She had to quietly remind herself that they were all part of the same team, despite Kat's every intention of making her feel like the outsider.

Noble Six limped over to her fallen rifle, whimpering as she stooped down to pick it up. How long had she been fighting now? At least an hour judging by the amount of light still left in the sky. Maybe even two. Or more. Six wasn't sure what ripped through the right calf of her armor. All she knew was that it hurt like hell. That and she was pretty sure the slick feeling running down her right forearm wasn't water. The Covenant bastards almost got lucky. Had it not been for her Armor Lock, when that Plasma Grenade stuck to her right elbow, she would have been done for.

The hum of engines (again) made Six look skywards, the Spartan grinning as she watched Covenant Cruisers, small ones, drop more forces nearby. And not just one of them, but three more of them. All of them dropped Elites from what she could see. Were these ones the Zealot class types Dr. Halsey had spoken about before? She certainly hoped so. The other Elites had been nothing more than bumbling idiots. Maybe it was those two wraiths she blew up. That had gotten their attention. If so, she should have blown them up sooner. Perhaps if she had done a lot of things sooner, the others would have still been alive.

_Noble __Six __stood__ atop __Sword __Base __watching __as __a
__Covenant __Cruiser __flew __away __on __an __escape __trajectory.
__Before __it __got __too __far, __a __pulse __of __energy __shot
__down __from__ the __sky, __blasting __a __large __hole __cleanly
__through __its __hull. __She__ followed __the __burning __ship
__with __her __eyes __as __it __fell._

_"Beautiful, ain't __it?"_

_Noble Six __looked __back __over __her __shoulder __to __see __Jorge
__walk __up __next __to __her._

_"Someone should __take __a __picture."_

_Six turned __back __to __the __crippled __Covenant __ship __as __it
__crashed __into __the __mountain side. __She __flinched __when__ she
__felt __something __land __on__ her__ shoulder. __Jerking __her
__head__ to __the __side, __she __quickly __realized __it __was
__Jorge's __armored __hand._

_"Nice work, __by__ the __way," __he__ told __her._

_Six's eyes __widened __in __shock. __While __the __battle __to__
take __back __Sword __Base __was __anything __but __a __cake __walk,
__she __didn't __expect __to__ get __any __praise __for __it. __Far
__from __it. __She __was __a __Spartan. __That's __what __a __Spartan
__did. __Six __turned __back__ to __the __crash __site, __saying
__the __first __thing __that __came__ to __mind. __"I __aim __to
__please."_

_Jorge looked __over __at __her, __the __way __he __tilted __his
__helmet __at __her __making __Six __smile. __She __could __just
__picture __his __incredulous __look, __a __look __that__ said __'Are
__you __kidding __me?' __It __was __nice __to __know __not __all __of
__them __looked __at __her __like __an __outsider._

Noble Six was on her knees, plasma and energy bolts hailing down all around her as she scrambled to get her fractured helmet off. She had just narrowly missed having her head taken off by an advancing Covenant with a beam rifle. While her quick reflexes saved her from death, it did little to stop the Beam Rifle from puncturing the right side of her visor and scorching right cheek. Six's visor half shattered on the right side, the rest of visor cracking spider web style. Finally getting the blasted thing off and whipping it at the closest advancing Covenant, Six scrambled to pick up her rifle as bolts of plasma hit her square in the chest from an advancing white armored Elite with a plasma rifle. Refusal boiled in her veins once again. Despite exhaustion and fatigue starting to set in, Six peppered the alien spawn with bullets, her face twisted in a fierce scowl. Like hell she was going to let this slow her down. Not when there was one last thing left she had to do. She wouldn't let the others down.

_Darkness __was __upon __them. __With __a __standard __issue
__sniper__ rifle __in __hand, __Six __carefully __and __quietly
__shimmied __along __the __narrow __pathway __winding __around __the
__cliff __side. __Just __in __front __of __her__ was __Noble __Three,
__Jun, __also __equipped __with __a __sniper __rifle __and __armed
__to __the __teeth._

__"Recon Team __Bravo __reporting __in: __Three __and __Six __in
__position. __It's __starting __to __get __crowded __up __here
__Kat."__

__"Then we're __closing __in." __Noble __Two's __voice __came __over
__the __Comm __a __bit __crackled __with __static, __but __mostly
__clear. __"Report __any __Covenant __structures __or __devices.
__Direct __action __may __be __necessary."__

__"Copy that."__

__Noble Six __climbed __over __a __waist __high __boulder __in __her
__path, __stepping __around __it __with __the __agility __of __a
__cat. __She __looked __up __from __her __feet __in __time __to
__catch __her __squad __mate __looking __at __her __with __his __head
__tilted __to __the __side __slightly. __Jun's __chuckle __came
__across __the __Comm __clearly, __Noble __Six __wondering __if __he
__was __smiling. __He __seemed __to __be __the __quietest __of __the
__group, __after __Six __that __is. __Noble __Six __wasn't __sure
__what __the __man __thought __of __her. __He __certainly __didn't
__give __off __the __negative __vibes __like __some __of __the
__others __gave __her, __but __that __didn't __mean __much.__

__"When Kat __runs __an __op, __direct __action __is __always
__necessary."__

__Noble Six blinked, looking at Jun as if for the first time realizing
he was standing there in front of her. Six silently berated herself
for letting her thoughts wander. Raising his rifle skyward, Jun
reached into one of his ammunition pockets and pulled out two clips.
He held them up for her to take. Noble Six stared at them
uriously.__

__"Here," Jun __said.__"You __may __need __these. __High-velocity
__armor-piercing."__

__Six blinked __again __in __surprise, __taking __the __clips __from
__her __squad __mate __when __it __was __clear __he __wouldn't __take
__them __back. __He __was __giving __these __to __her? __Noble __Six
__tucked __them __into __her __breast __pocket.__

__"They'll take __the __hat __off __an __Elite __at __two __thousand
__yards."__ Jun __turned __his __gaze __from __the __horizon __to
__her. __He __gave __her __a __nod __before __proceeding __forward
__once __again, __scanning __ahead. __"And __they __ain't
__cheap."__

__Six found __herself __looking __down __at __her __pocket __again,
__a __small __smile __creeping __onto __her __face. __She __wasn't
__sure __if __Jun __liked __her, __or __accepted __her __for __that
__matter. __But __he __certainly __didn't __hate __her.__

Skin seared to armor, Six biting back a cry as she unloaded a wave of
bullets on her assaulter. The white armored Elite - was that the
tenth one in the span of minutes? She had lost track - dropped like a
bag of potatoes when one lucky bullet ripped through its weakened
shields and straight through its face. Six immediately spun around,
using her rifle like a battering ram to smack a growling yellow
armored Elite wielding an Energy Sword across the face. She heard it
long before it got to her, Six's only saving grace from being

skewered through the back like Emile being the Covenant's noisy stomping feet. The Elite's shield dropped, two bullets to the head from her pistol putting it out of its misery. Blue shots of plasma ripped through the air going wide. Six immediately swivelled left, towards the Elite aiming at her, with her rifle raised and pistol back on her hip. Just behind this one was the one she was looking for. The one in red. She knew it would come if she waited long enough.

_Noble __Six __braced __herself __as __Kat __steered __the __Warthog __towards __the __left __sharply. __An __exploding __Warthog __narrowly __missed __crashing __into __them __on __the __right. __Enemy __Banshees __zoomed __past __them __in __the __sky, __peppering __the __ground __around __them __with __green __streaks __of __plasma. __Warthog __turrets __sprayed __the __air __with __bullets, __Falcon __gunners __and __the __Scorpions __doing __the __same. __They __were __currently __charging __towards __the __once __hidden __Covenant __landing __zone __recently __discovered __by __Noble __Six __and __Noble __Three __the __night __before. __Blue __streaks __of __plasma __fired __from __wraiths __in __the __distance __seared __the __sky. __Warthogs, __Scorpion __tanks __and __Mongooses __alike __weaved __left __and __right __to __avoid __the __meteorite-like __masses __of __energy, __continuing __their __charge __forward __towards __their __designated __target._

"Incoming!"

_Six's __eyes __widened __as __the __bridge __they __were __about __to __cross __blew __up __in __an __eruption __of __fire __and __debris. __Kat __still __drove __forward __regardless, __pedal __to __the __metal. __The __warthog __in __front __of __them, __carrying __a __full __load __of __soldiers, __disappeared __into __the __flaming __stone __mess __ahead. __Kate __turned __to __look __at __Six._

_"Might want __to __hold __onto __something!"_

_The next __thing __Six __knew, __they __were __airborne, __the __hood __of __the __warthog __on __a __collision __course __with __the __burnt __remnants __of __the __other __side __of __the __bridge. __The __impact __was __a __jarring __one, __even __with __the __protective __layer __of __her __MJOLNIR __Mark __V __armor. __Six __went __flipping __head __over __heels __in __the __air, __in __complete __disorientation, __losing __track __of __Kat, __the __warthog __gunner __and __the __warthog __itself. __And __then __she __was __flat __on __the __ground._

"Ngh..."

_Six __let __out __a __pained __breath, __her __head __spinning __and __muscles __protesting __in __pain. __She __found __herself __staring __at __the __broken __bridge, __the __kamikaze __stunt __Kat __just __pulled __somehow __not __killing __her. __Catching __a __flash __of __teal __in __her __peripherals, __Six __knew __Kat __was __fine __too. __Six __didn't __know __what __happened __to __the __gunner __though. __Nor __did __she __want __to __know. __Closing __her __eyes __trying __to __catch __her __breath, __screams __echoed __in __her __ringing __ears. __Opening __her __eyes, __Six __immediately __wished __she __hadn't. __To __her __horror, __she __watched __as

__a __Warthog __full __of __soldiers __burst __through __the
__flaming __end __of __the __bridge __only __for __the __airborne
__vehicle __to __fall __short. __The __trio __of __soldiers
__disappeared __into __the __fissure __below. __Noble __Six __held
__her__ breath, __her __mind __reeling __at __how __that __could
__have __been __her. __Even __with __her __advanced __armor __and
__super human __upgrades, __she __couldn't __survive __a __fall
__like __that.__

__"Six!" screamed __a __voice __close __by. __It __echoed __in __her
__head __like__ a __spiked __ping __pong __ball __bouncing__ around
__inside __her __skull. __"Can __you __hear __me?"__

__Something or __someone __was __shaking __her. __Or __maybe __she
__was __shaking __without__ realizing __it.__

__"Six, you __alright?! "__

__Six groaned, __her __body __shuddering __in __pain __as __she
__slowly __pushed __herself __to __her __hands __and __knees. __An__
armored __hand __latched __onto __her __arm __and __dragged __her
__to __her __feet.__

__"I could __use __your __help!"__

__A grenade __launcher __was __roughly __shoved __into __her __hands,
__Six __blinking __away __the __cobwebs __in __her __mind __before
__looking __up. __Kat __darted __off __ahead, __Noble __Six's __feet
__automatically __trudging __behind __the __Lieutenant __Commander.
__"I'm __on __my __way," __Six __said, __immediately __narrowing
__her __eyes __at __her __first __Covenant __victim.__

__Later Six __would __realize __that __that __was __the __first__ time
__Kat __had __acknowledged __her.__

Six went staggering backwards as pink needles and blue plasmabolts tore through the armor plating of her left shoulder and thigh, drawing blood. With her rifle cradled against her right hip and her pistol held in her left hand, Six unleashed a torrent of bullets at the multitude of Elites approaching from her front and left, every single one of them with Energy Swords as their primary weapons. Her eyes still glared at the now closer Zealot armored in red. She would recognize that ugly mug anywhere.

__Six __stared __out __the __back __of __the __Pelican __as __it
__flew __over __the __remains __of __New__ Alexandria. __The __city
__was __up __in __flames, __pillars __of__ black __smoke __lining
__the __sky __like __towers __of __onyx. __This __wasn't __supposed
__to __happen, __was __it? __Noble __Six __squeezed__ Jorge's __dog
tags __in __her __hand. __She __had __just __successfully __helped
__in__ the __evacuation __of __the __remaining __citizens __at __the
__Starport __exit. __Before __that, __she __and __Noble __Five __took
__out __the __Covenant __super__carrier __in __geo-synchronous
__orbit. __The __victory __rang __a __bit __hollow __with __only
__her __making __it __back. __Six __could __only __imagine __just
__how __many __others __had __fallen __already.__

__"Your report __will __have __to __wait, __Lieutenant." __Carter
__greeted __her __with __a __pat __on __the __back__ the __moment
__she __stepped __off __the __Pelican, __much __to __Six's

__surprise. __"The __Covenant __are __jamming __all __Comms __to
__Command. __Kat __needs __your __help __running __a
__counter-op."__

__Six nodded __her __head __in __acknowledgement, __following __Carter
__across __the __roof top __of __the __building __the __rest __of
__the __team __resided __in. __A __Falcon __was __just __taking __off
__as__ they __reached __the __door __which __led__ into __the
__stairwell,__ leading __inside __the __building.__

__"It's good __to __have __you __back."__

__Noble Six __would __have __stumbled __in __her __steps __had __she
__not __been __paying __attention. __Turning __to__ look __back __at
__her __Commander,__ she __couldn't __bring __herself __to __smile
__at __his __comment,__ but __she __did __nod __at __him. __"Sorry
__I __came __alone." __Six __truly __meant __that.__

__Carter bowed __his __head. __"Make __him __proud."__

__Noble Six __went __downstairs __first, __where __the __others
__rested __and __contemplated. __Jun __sat __on __a __table __near
__the __large __ceiling __to__ floor __windows __overlooking __the
__city.__

__"Look at __this __place," __he __said, __peering__ through
__binoculars. __Jun's __helmet __was __next __to __him __on __the
__table. __"Used __to __be __the __crown __jewel... __Not
__anymore."__

__Six remained __standing, __leaning __back __against __the __wall
__to __Kat's __left.__

__"Hey_. __You __made __it."__

__Six looked __up __at __Jun, __this __being __the __second __time
__she'd __seen __him __with __his __helmet __off. __The __first
__time __was __when __they __faced __Dr. __Halsey __in __Sword
__Base. __No __wait, __this __was __the __third __time. __He __was
__helmetless __when __she __first __met __with __Noble __Team. __A
__small __smile __stretched __across __Six's __face,__ Jun's __smile
__and __genuine __concern __for __her __rather __heart warming.
__Six __could __have __sworn __she__ saw __relief __in __Kat's __eyes
__too __when __the __Lieutenant __Commander __glanced __at __her
__briefly. __In __the __short __time __that __she __was __with
__Noble __Team, __they __had __gotten __comfortable __with __her,
__after __their __initial __hesitation. __And __Six, __as __much __as
__she __didn't __want __to __admit __it __to__ herself, __she __had
__gotten __comfortable __with __all __of __them __too. __War __tended
__to __do __that __to __people __it__ seemed. __Thinking __about __it
__further, __Six __wanted __to __laugh. __She __certain __found
__herself __attached __to __an __odd __bunch, __herself
__included.__

__"It's a __regular __family __reunion."__

__Then __Emile __talked __and __Six __started __to __doubt __herself.

>__

>Noble __Six __looked __to __her __left, __catching __sight __of

Emile sitting on the floor, fully armored and toying with his kukri knife. That seemed to be a nervous habit of his, or perhaps just his way of passing the time. Maybe it was a means of intimidating people, for right now, Noble Six felt intimidated. Out of all of Noble Team, she had yet to warm up to Emile, and he to her. She could hear the disappointment in his voice, the bitterness. There was the silent accusation there, about why she survived and Jorge didn't. Closing her eyes momentarily, Six reached in to one of her ammunition pouches and pulled out Noble Five's dog tags. It would be of little solace to Emile she was sure, but maybe, just maybe it would help. Out of everyone, Emile seemed to have argued with Jorge the most. Almost like a married couple. And out of all of them, he probably deserved to hold onto it the most. Six held up Jorge's dog tags to Emile.

"Keep 'em..."

Noble Six's head raised an inch higher in surprise.

"He gave 'em to you..." Noble Four looked up at her, the tone of his voice no longer as cold and harsh as it was moments before. Noble Six really wished she could see his face right now and not the grinning skull decal painted over top. It was so hard to read people if you couldn't see their eyes.

After a silent pause, Emile nodded to her and Six could almost imagine his softened expression. "I'll honor him my own way." He raised his kukri knife to emphasize his point. Noble Six smiled under her helmet. Emile didn't know how much it meant to her, him letting her keep Jorge's dog tags. That was a symbol of acceptance. From Jorge. From Emile. And it meant more to her than Emile would ever know. If only Noble Two did haven't to die so soon afterwards...

Six would never forget the moment her heart stopped, watching as Kat's limp body lurched towards the ground. Instinct took over horror, Six immediately catching her fallen teammate before jerking her head in the direction of the one who shot the fatal shot. The red Zealot. The very same smug looking bastard who was closing in on her now with the rest of its tainted kind brandishing Energy Swords at her as if that was supposed to scare her. Despite not being able to do much before the Covenant ship retreated out of range, Six was able to ding the Covenant's armor with the final bullet from Kat's pistol after the rest of Noble Team whittled down its shields. There would be two more times she would catch a glimpse of the Zealot before now, each time Six unable to pursue. But here, here the thing was, practically walking right up to her. And Six couldn't wait.

An Elite in white armor dropped to the ground on her left first, followed shortly by the Zealot in red armor. Six had never felt

better, watching as the bastard finally drew its last breath, eyes bulging in surprise. Mess with one of her team and you messed with her. Not a good idea. There was a reason she was labelled _hyper_lethal_. The worst thing you could do was piss her off.

A blur of movement in front walloped her, Noble Six suddenly finding herself dazed and on her back on the ground. She looked to the left, just as another Sangheili in white jumped at her with its Energy Sword raised to strike. Six kicked out her left foot, the limb catching the enemy in the chest before she shoved the Covenant backwards, stumbling away from her. The pulsing blade scored a path along the front of her shin in the motion, Noble Six biting her tongue to keep from screaming. She kicked her right foot out just in time to knock back another red Zealot before it skewered her with its sword. Her booted foot caught it in its face, sending the Covenant spinning around on its feet away from her like a top, dropping its weapon.

The white armored Elite from before came back for round two, stabbing at Six's unarmored head the moment it was close enough. Six jerked her head out of the way just in time, shoot her right fist upwards and catching the ugly beast in the jaw with a vicious crack. The Elite's head jerked backwards, the alien collapsing on the ground just above her head somewhere, before falling still. The second red Zealot recovered quickly, despite having to almost literally dance around the piles of bodies of its dead comrades, snatching up its fallen weapon from the ground. It charged at Six, Energy Sword drawn and raised, as another Elite occupied the Spartan's attention. The moment the distracting Covenant was pushed away from her, all Six saw was an Energy Sword zooming towards her head.

_ "Noble __Leader, __seek __immediate __medical __attention." _

_ Six's head __twisted __around, __to __look __in __the __direction __of __the __cockpit. __Auntie __Dot's __synthesized __voice __rang __clear __over __the __Comms __despite __the __multitude __of __Covenant __Banshees __and __the __Covenant __Cruiser __on __their __tail __trying __to __blow __them __out __of __the __sky._

_ "Noble Leader, __please __respond." _

_ Noble Six __made __her __way __to __the __front __of __the __UNSC __Pelican, __stumbling __into __the __wall __when __some __Banshee __plasma __rounds __smacked her __in __the __back. __Her __shield __held. __The __pelican __swerved __left __to __evade __it, __Emile __at __the __rear, __making __quick __work __of __the __nuisance __with __his __grenade __launcher. __Luck __must __have __been __on __their __side __for __the __explosion __from __Emile's __grenade __sent __the __first __banshee __slamming __into __a __second __one __pursuing __them, __both __of __them __exploding __in __a __boom __of __light._

_ "Please respond," __the __AI __repeated. __ "Sierra __Two __Five __Nine. __You __are __alarming __me." _

_ Noble Six __staggered __the __rest __of __the __way __to __the __cockpit __as __the __Pelican __swerved __to __the __right __this __time, __still __trying __to __shake __Covenant __pursuit. __Carter's __helmet __thumped __to __the __floor __at __Six's __feet._

_"Not sure __how __long __she's __gonna __stay __together," __Carter
__said, __eyes __forward. __"Skies __are __jammed __up
__anyway."_

__Noble Six's __eyes __widened __at __the __sight __of __blood
__splatter __across __the __cockpit __windshield, __her __gaze
__immediately __turning __to __her __Commander. __Crimson __oozed
__from __Carter's __MJOLNIR __armor, __blood __also __pouring __from
__his __ears, __nose __and __mouth._

_"Gotta get __you __off __of __her, __Lieutenant."_

_"Sir, you-" __Six __didn't __know __what __she __wanted __to __do,
__whether __it __be __to __scream, __gape __or __just __plain __pull
__Carter __from __the __pilot's __seat __and __fly __the __damn
__Pelican __herself. __At __least __that __way, __Emile __could
__hopeful __attend __to __the __Commander's __wounds. __But __Carter
__would __hear __none __of __that._

_"Don't wanna __hear __it," __he __said __before __she __could
__finish __her __sentence. __He __didn't __even __look __at __her.
_"Get __the __package __to __the __Autumn."_

__Six gritted __her __teeth __and __made __a __fist. __Dr. __Halsey's
__words __floated __in __her __mind, __the __Spartan __still
__refusing __to __believe __them. __Yet, __as __things __were, __she
__couldn't __deny __the __truth __they __held. __Looking __to
__the __floor, __Six __took __a __deep __breath __before __steeling
__herself. __"Done," __she __said __raising __her __gaze __to __her
__commanding __officer._

_"Not yet, __it's __not..." __Carter __looked __back __over __his
__shoulder __at __Noble __Four. __"Emile, __go __with __her. __It's
__a __ground __game __now."_

_"It's been __an __honor, __Sir." __Emile __raised __his __arm __and
__saluted._

_"Likewise," Carter __said __turning __his __gaze __forward
__again._

__Six crushed __the __head __rest __of __the __pilot's __chair, __the
__thing __she __was __holding __onto __at __the __time, __with __her
__armored __hand. __She __stared __at __Carter's __helmet __on __the
__floor._

_"I'll do __what __I __can __to __draw __their __fire," __Noble __One
__said._

__Noble Six __gathered __up __her __courage __and __turned __her
__back __on __Noble __One. __She __took __a __step __towards
__Emile._

"Six..."

__She turned __back. __And __for __the __first __time __since
__getting __onto __this __Pelican, __Noble __One __looked __straight
__back __at __her._

_"That A.I. __that __chose __you..."_

__Six could __feel __a __lump __form__ in __her __throat.__

_"She made __the __right __choice..."_

For a long time, all Six knew was refusal. Refusal to give up ground. Refusal to let the Covenant win. Refusal to let humanity's hope die. But then there was the refusal of her heart. The refusal to get close to other people. And the refusal for other people to get close to her.

Somehow that all changed during her time with Noble Team, Noble Six finding something in them she didn't think she'd ever recover after all this time. Maybe it was the sense of familiarity all of them gave her, the longer she spent time with them. Something she had thought lost long ago with the glassing of her birthplace. Yet here they were, all this time, with her. Carter, the protective older brother. Kat, the take-no-nonsense-from-anyone older sister. Emile, the younger, rebellious sibling. Jorge, the wise old uncle. And Jun, the quiet, thoughtful cousin who always watched your back. Six didn't know when it happened or how, but she was glad it happened.

And so, when the Covenant Energy Sword raced towards her head, the Zealot seemingly laughing at her in triumph, Six refused to do anything else but smile. It was already too late. Noble Team, her adopted family, had already passed the torch. And there was nothing the Covenant could do about it.

* * *

><p>AN: **__In __case __there __was __some __confusion, __the __sections __of __text __in __italics __were __flash backs.__

End
file.